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STUDIO NOTES.

BY MRS. OLIVER BELL BUNCE.



AS THE warm weather approaches there are certain exhibitions which take place in which the public have a chance of seeing what is really going on in the artistic world. Some few weeks ago a tea party an afternoon affair, was given at the Waldorf by the Society of Ceramic Arts. Many of these artists in the commencement of the summer months leave town for the purpose of sketching the spring blossoms, some for the teaching of special branches in mineral painting, some, to join classes in which there are a number of artists like themselves, and so before going a sort of annual feast for the eyes is given to those who particularly admire that wonderful art, known as china painting. In a large and handsomely furnished room in the Waldorf were four good-sized tables which were filled with some rare specimens of this exquisite ware.

Madame S. E. Le Prince the President has long been known as an adept in the art of painting china. In England, so proficient and artistic was her work, that at one time some of her special designs reached royalty and found their way into Windsor Castle. Madame Le Prince's style is a broad one—masterful in its way, her conceptions are strong and ideal. In all the branches of this art, this clever woman stands first on the list. All work done by her brush is thoroughly finished and charming in every particular detail.

Among the clever women who belong to this Society the treasurer Miss Helen Montfort is one excellent in all her methods. Miss Montfort paints violets to the life. In fact, her china has much of the water-color softness in appearance, its shadows and fine lines being exceedingly true to nature. At this exhibition, she had three pieces well worthy of mention. Among them, was a hot-water jug whose delicious scheme was the pansy which seemed to be a centre decoration, the spout and upper part of the jug being a mottled brown. So well blended were these tints, that it was impossible to find out where they commenced, and where they ended. A photograph in heart shape was charmingly depicted in apple blossoms, the tones of delicate pink and white being beautifully painted.

Another, was a plaque in which violets were the device, a perfect combination of tones in this color which had been handled most skilfully by this clever woman. In the painting of tea trays it is wonderful how the field grasses and spring blossoms under the artistic eye of Miss Montfort are made to assume their true shape and breathe as it were by her guiding hand. Miss Montfort's studio is a charming place where an inspiration can be given even to those who know but little of this beautiful art.

In this Society there are men as well as women who follow in the same lines. Mr. Edward Reeves of Boston, is considered by everyone as the best of china painters. His designs are peculiarly rich, the decoration of his work individual in character, and broad in tone.

Among the unique work that he has done a chocolate set in gold and green of four cups with saucers and

large tray to match, held its own without question when alongside of foreign importations and the like.

Mr. Reeves is also a painter in still-life subjects: his first fruit pieces always up to mark and exquisite in the shading of different tones, while so delicate are the backgrounds of these beautiful groups, that for any room they form a charming focus.

At this exhibition among the pieces of Ceramic ware which claimed the most attention were two tankards painted by Mr. Marshall Fry, Jr. This very young man is a genius in the china art. These splendid affairs in the way of jugs were tall, of formidable shape and with very quaint handles. For a person to have given a pretty subject only to these big pieces, they undoubtedly would have been a failure. But so extensive was the design, so splendidly were all the tones blended, so great was the harmony of colors, that they were marvels of beauty as a whole.

The entire plan was a grouping of rich tints. As a centre decoration there were some American Beauty roses in all their splendid colorings, which were made the prevailing scheme. As a high light there was a mass of deep dark mazarine blue which seemed to stand out just above them, while the lower part of these great jugs were of such varying colors that one could not really tell of what hue it was, a remarkable production of ceramic ware. Mr. Frye should become a still-life painter, his ideals are of the highest, with artistic conceptions of the widest range. He certainly ranks well as a painter of Ceramic art.

Miss Mary Taylor that excellent teacher of painting at the Cooper Institute sent in for this exhibition three miniatures on china, the largest a society leader from Boston—a little girl, and a lady with pure white hair. As a miniature painter this clever young woman does remarkably well. The flesh tints of her portraits are very life-like while the tones and colors of gowns and hats are wonderfully depicted. Miss Taylor has made the miniature do wonderful duty on bon-bon boxes, an entirely new idea of which this artist is the only creator in this line of novelties.

On the cover a picture is painted, and then the confection box is well decorated in gilt on all sides. In the painting of tea-trays Miss Taylor is peculiarly happy, choosing as her designs, effective bunches either in flowers or fruits, which stand out and make for the whole a decorative bit in color. Miss Taylor's studio is her workshop, a pleasant place where on a broad thoroughfare, she works hard and by constant industry has made for herself a line in portraiture rather different from those of other artists.

The Ceramic Society can boast of excellent work. It is governed by women of artistic taste, whose lives are spent in seeking for themselves a true knowledge of their art and its work.

